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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6202

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SIPDIS

STATE FOR S/CT - RHONDA SHORE  
STATE ALSO FOR EAP/MTS - M. COPPOLA  
STATE PASS NCTC

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [EFIN](#) [KCRM](#) [KHLS](#) [AEMR](#) [SN](#)

SUBJECT: SINGAPORE: 2008 COUNTRY REPORT REPORT ON TERRORISM

REF: 08 STATE 120019

¶1. Singapore continued its bilateral and multilateral intelligence and law enforcement cooperation to investigate terrorist groups, focusing on Jemaah Islamiya (JI). As of December, Singapore held in detention 19 persons with links to terrorist groups. Detainees included members of JI who had plotted to carry out attacks in Singapore in the past and members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Under detention orders, the detainees were required to undergo a program of religious counseling with a group of volunteer religious counselors. Singapore enlisted the support of religious teachers and scholars to study JI's ideology, develop teachings to counter the group's spread within Singapore's Muslim community, and provide counseling to detainees. Religious counseling for detainees continues after release from detention. One person with links to terrorist groups was newly detained in 2008. Singapore released a total of 11 persons in 2008. One JI detainee was released on a Restriction Order (RO) in February; and Singapore released five Singaporean JI members on ROs in September; another four Singapore JI detainees and one MILF detainee were released on ROs in December 2007. Singapore authorities determined that all 11 persons had cooperated in investigations and responded positively to rehabilitation, including religious counseling. There are no known cases of recidivism to date.

¶2. In February 2008, Mas Selemat Kastari, the Singapore leader of JI, escaped from detention. Despite a massive manhunt, the Singapore authorities failed to locate and re-capture Kastari. Kastari reportedly escaped by climbing out of a restroom window located in a meeting area of the detention center.

¶3. In February 2008, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) published the results of its review of Singapore's anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing regime, finding it compliant or largely compliant with most of the FATF's recommendations. The evaluation noted that Singapore had improved feedback to financial institutions, enhanced supervisory oversight and stepped up training, and implemented a new cross-border cash declaration system. However, concerns remained over the effectiveness of Singapore's money laundering regulations. In December 2008, the government amended the Terrorism (Suppression of Financing) Act to allow the government to respond to requests for extradition from Parties to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, even in the absence of an extradition treaty, in relation to terrorism financing offenses.

¶4. In March 2008, the United States Department of Homeland Security and Singapore signed a Science and Technology Agreement to provide a framework to expand cooperation and carry out collaborative projects to enhance border security. In June 2008, the United States Transportation Security

Administration and Singapore signed a Memorandum of Cooperation to strengthen ongoing collaboration on aviation security. In August 2008, the United States and Singapore signed a host country Memorandum of Understanding concerning challenge inspections under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Singapore has been a signatory to the CWC since 1997. In December 2007, the United States and Singapore had signed a declaration of principles to implement a trial of the Secure Freight Initiative (SFI). However, in August 2008, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Singapore Ministry of Transport announced that both parties had agreed not to proceed with the SFI trial. CBP has decided instead to focus its resources on strategic trade corridors.

¶5. In September 2008, Singapore cooperated with U.S. authorities to investigate and subsequently apprehend a Singapore suspect who had allegedly sent terrorist threats by e-mail to several airlines and embassies around the world.

¶6. Singaporean officials took strong measures to enhance maritime security in nearby waters, especially the Strait of Malacca, including countering terrorist threats, piracy, and other criminal attacks. The three littoral states (Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore) continued their surface, naval, and air patrols in and over the Strait of Malacca. In August 2008, The Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) hosted the 4th Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS) Maritime Security Information Exchange, which brought together representatives from 17 countries to promote naval interoperability and information exchange. The RSN continued construction of the Changi C2 Centre, which will house a multi-agency Port Operations and Control Centre, a Multinational Operations and Exercises Centre, and an Information Fusion Centre, the latter to be staffed with International Liaison Officers. A core function of the Changi C2 Centre will be to monitor shipping traffic approaching and within the Singapore Strait, exchanging maritime information with interested partners to maintain vigilance for any anomalies that might indicate piracy, maritime terrorism, or some other illicit event. The Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) Information Sharing Centre (ISC) continued its operations, connecting 14 governments in Asia to enhance piracy-related information sharing.

¶7. The RSN participated in the annual bilateral exercise "Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training" with the U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard, and also the multilateral "South East Asia Cooperation Against Terrorism" (SEACAT) exercise. Singapore also conducted its own internal, annual exercise "APEX," which tests the government's multi-agency response to a maritime terrorism incident.

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